

Mr. Chairman, my remarks this afternoon come primarily from a book entitled "The 5,000 Year Leap," by W. Cleon Skousen. The author quotes our founders frequently, as I will.

No principle was emphasized more vigorously during the Constitutional Convention than the necessity of limiting the authority of the federal government. Not only was this to be done by carefully defining the powers delegated to the government, but the Founders were determined to bind down its administrators with legal chains codified in the Constitution.

It will be recalled that one of the reasons many of the states would not adopt the original draft of the Constitution was they feared the encroachments of the federal government on the rights of the states and the people. The first ten amendments were therefore added to include the ancient, unalienable rights of Anglo-Saxon freemen so there could be no question as to the strictly limited authority the people were conferring on their central government. This is why the ninth and tenth amendments were written.

The people felt that the hedging up of federal authority was absolutely essential because of their experience with corrupt and abusive governments in the past. Alexander Hamilton commented on this by saying:

*There is, in the nature of sovereign power, an impatience of control that disposes those who are invested with the exercise of it to look with an evil eye upon all external attempts to restrain or direct its operations... This tendency is not difficult to be accounted for. It has its origin in the love of power. Power controlled or abridged is almost always the rival and enemy of that power by which it is controlled or abridged.*

Political power automatically gravitates toward the center, and the purpose of the Constitution is to prevent that from happening. The centralization of political power always destroys liberty by removing the decision-making function from the people on the local level and transferring it to the officers of the central government. Soon, the people lose the will to solve their own problems. They cease to be involved in community affairs. They seek the anonymity of oblivion in the seething crowds and often denigrate into faceless automatons who have neither a voice nor a vote. Thomas Jefferson said this:

*The way to have good and safe government is not to trust it all to one, but to divide it among the many, distributing to every one exactly the functions he is competent to perform best. Let the national government be entrusted with the defense of the nation, and its foreign and federal*

*relations; the State governments with the civil rights, laws, police, and administration of what concerns the State generally; the counties with the local concerns of the counties; and each township direct the interests within itself. It is by dividing and subdividing these republics, from the great national one down through all its subordinations, until it ends in the administration of every man's farm (and family) by himself; by placing under every one what his own eye may superintend, that all will be done for the best. What has destroyed liberty and the rights of man in every government which has ever existed under the sun? The generalizing and concentrating all cares into one body.*

James Madison, the father of the Constitution wrote this:

*The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce... The powers reserved to the several states will extend to all the objects which, in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties, and properties of the people, and the internal order, improvement, and prosperity of the State.*

I quote Thomas Jefferson one more time:

*The true theory of our Constitution is surely the wisest and best... Let the general government be reduced to foreign concerns only, may it be reduced to a very simple organization, and a very inexpensive one; a few plain duties to be performed by a few servants.*

I conclude with the prophetic words of John Fiske, one of the greatest American historians of the last generation. Over a century ago, he saw some dangerous trends away from the founders' basic formula of sound government. He wrote what we could today call a prophecy:

*If the day should ever arrive (which God forbid!) when the people of the different parts of our country shall allow their local affairs to be administered by prefects sent from Washington, and when the self-government of the states shall have been so far lost as that of the departments of France, or even so closely limited as that of the counties of England--on that day the political career of the American people will have been robbed of its most interesting and valuable features, and the usefulness of this nation will be lamentably impaired.*